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ABSTRACT

In November 1997, recognizing the critical importance of preschool as a foundation for success both in school and in life, California's State Superintendent of Public Instruction convened a task force of distinguished educators, parents, researchers, and civic and business leaders from throughout the state to consider how to make preschool programs universally available within the next 10 years to all 3- and 4-year-olds whose families want this option. This report presents the findings and recommendations of the Universal Preschool Task Force, offering details and proposals for a comprehensive program. The report details six major recommendations: (1) offering universal preschool; (2) developing a master plan; (3) taking immediate action to phase in universal preschool; (4) raising program standards of preschool providers; (5) making universal preschool available in a variety of settings and coordinating programs with other services; and (6) committing funds for the long-term. The report's two appendices include the accreditation criteria and procedures of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and the Child Development Permit Matrix. (JPB)

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Ready to Learn

Quality Preschools for California in the 21st Century

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Ready to Learn

Quality Preschools for California in the 21st Century

UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL

The Report of the Superintendent's
Universal Preschool Task Force

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CONTENTS

Message from Delaine Eastin v

Acknowledgments vi

Executive Summary xi

A New Way of Thinking About Education 1

Recommendations

1. Offer Universal Preschool 3
2. Master Plan 7
3. Start Now 10
4. Standards 14
5. Providers 21
6. Long-Term Funding Mechanisms 23

A Call to Action 27

Glossary 31

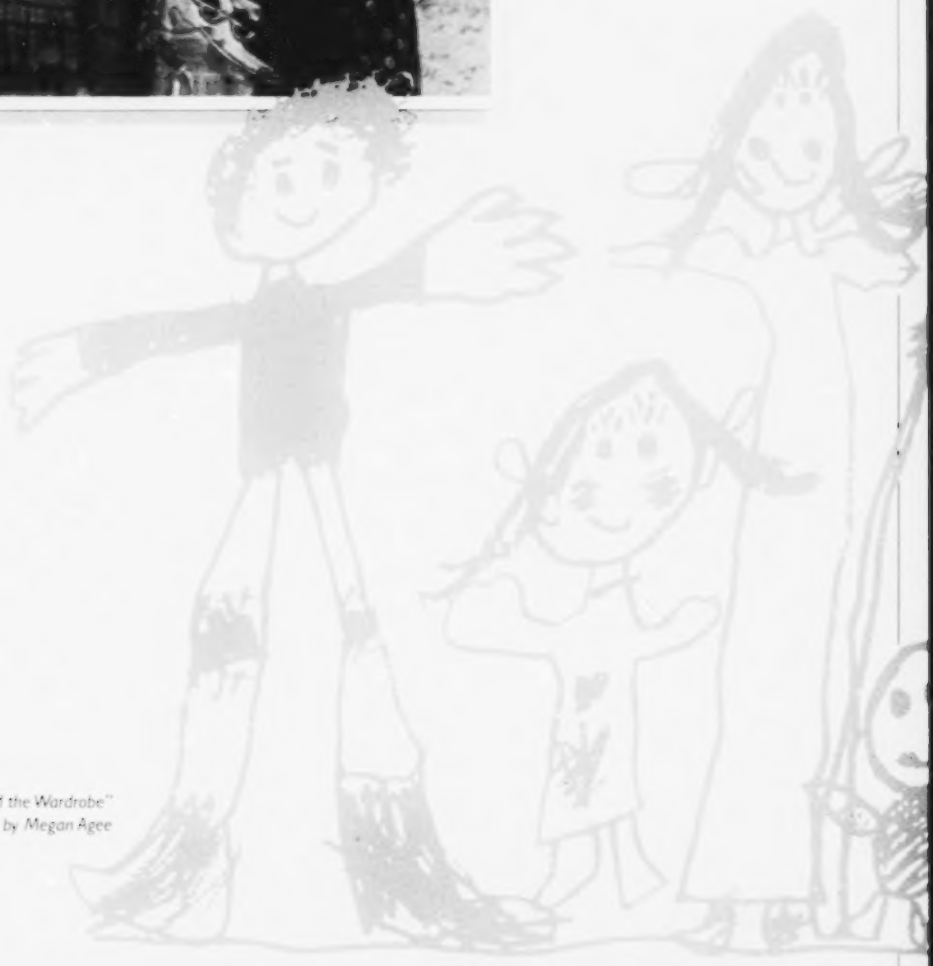
Appendix A. Accreditation Criteria and Procedures of the National Association for the Education of Young Children 33

Appendix B. The Child Development Permit Matrix 35

Selected References 37

"My dad in shorts"
Artwork by Alex Sanchez

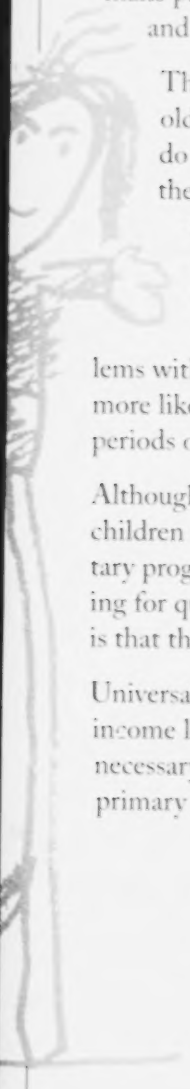
Elk Grove Unified School District



"The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe"
Artwork by Megan Agee

MESSAGE FROM DELAINE EASTIN

BECAUSE early childhood education can play such a crucial role in children's future success, I convened the Universal Preschool Task Force in November 1997 to consider how to make preschool programs available to all three- and four-year-old California children.



The research is clear. Three- and four-year-olds who attend preschool are more likely to do well academically and socially throughout the rest of their schooling and later as adults in both their personal and their professional lives. These youngsters are less likely to be placed in special education classes, drop out of school, or have problems with law enforcement. As adults they are more likely to attend college and to avoid long periods of unemployment or welfare.

Although not all parents will want to send their children to preschool—and this is purely a voluntary program—many parents are desperately looking for quality preschool programs. The sad truth is that these programs are not readily available.

Universal preschool will give all children, from all income levels, an equal opportunity to receive the necessary preparation to be ready to learn in the primary grades. While the investment for a universal preschool program is substantial, the return is even greater. It is estimated that for every dollar spent on quality preschools, the return on investment is $7.

But more is at stake than just the quantifiable dollars. Research on the brain is revealing something far more important and more powerful. The period between birth to age six is a profoundly crucial time in brain development. After birth many important connections within the brain are made, not so much because of nature as because of nurture; experiential opportunities are keys to full brain development. We must help *all* children to receive optimal connectivity within the brain by ensuring the availability of universal preschool.

I am extremely grateful to the 53 members of the Universal Preschool Task Force, who grappled with many complex issues and who worked long and hard to develop this report. This document is just a beginning, and it is my fervent hope that California will become a leader in providing quality universal preschool for our children as we enter the twenty-first century.

Delaine Eastin

State Superintendent of Public Instruction

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE Superintendent's Universal Preschool Task Force brought together California leaders from a variety of fields. All had one common interest: preparing children for success in school. The task force membership was both broadly based and highly diverse. It included experts from cities, suburbs, and rural areas; school district superintendents, administrators, and teachers; child care and development professionals; business and civic leaders; university-based specialists; and parents. In addition, the task force was assisted by nationally known experts and content specialists who shared their knowledge about successful programs and relevant research. All the task force members, staff, and expert presenters contributed to this report through their participation in the task force meetings and their review and discussion of drafts.

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"My brother"
Artwork by Alex Sanchez

Executive Summary

As the millennium draws near, it is becoming increasingly clear that during the twentieth century the way of life and approaches to educating children in the United States have changed irrevocably. We now know that a stimulating environment and positive learning experiences during the early years have a powerful effect on young children's later performance in school and behavior as adults. To develop the highly educated workforce needed in the twenty-first century, we must change our way of thinking about early education and provide quality preschool programs to help our children succeed.

> While quality programs exist in California, resources to support these programs are limited; and there are often long waiting lists for children to get into these programs. Consequently, far too many California families have few choices, or no choice, in gaining access to high-quality developmental opportunities for their preschool children.

As a recent national study of early childhood education noted, "A growing body of research has established that the majority of America's young children spend their day in settings that are poor to mediocre in quality—settings that compromise children's long-term development" (Kagan and Cohen 1997, 2). The result is often a desperate scramble among parents of young children to find child care that is trustworthy, reliable, and affordable.

Universal Preschool Task Force

In November 1997, recognizing the critical importance of preschool as a foundation for success both in school and in life, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin convened a task force of distinguished educators, parents, researchers, and civic and business leaders from throughout California to consider how to make preschool programs universally available within the next ten years to all three- and four-year-olds whose families want this option.

Universal preschool is an integral part of Superintendent Eastin's agenda for improved student achievement in California. The concept of universal preschool recognizes that before children enter kindergarten, much of their potential for learning and healthy growth has been shaped—in some cases it has already been diminished. Universal preschool is intimately linked with the movement toward higher standards and expectations for all California students and offers broad opportunities to prepare students for personal and academic success.

This report, *Ready to Learn: Quality Preschools for California in the 21st Century*, presents the findings and recommendations of the Superintendent's Universal Preschool Task Force. It offers details and proposals for a comprehensive program to be phased in over the next ten years. It represents the best thinking of leaders in the field on the premise that now is the time to move ahead with a realistic and feasible plan.

Urgent Education Priority

THE timing of this report is critically important. California is enjoying a period of economic strength and optimism. Nevertheless, the state continues to lag behind most other states in the educational achievement and academic success of its students. In addition, extensive research in recent years has demonstrated the undeniable influence of preschool education on children's later success in school. When children experience success in school, numerous other problems, such as dropping out of school, delinquency, crime, and teenage pregnancy, are prevented. Reliable studies have shown that every $1 invested in quality preschool programs saves $7 in expenditures for social and rehabilitative services later on (Berrueta-Clements and others 1984). California's educational system is at a crucial juncture, and the need for universal preschool must be considered among the state's most urgent education priorities.

In addition, there is an enormous need for *quality* preschools. According to research on preschool and early childhood programs, high standards of program quality are one of the most important keys to children's future academic success. This report defines quality in all of its dimensions, including results for children, the nature of services provided to children and families, program standards, professional standards, adult-to-child ratios and group size, facilities, accountability, evaluation, and availability of funds. All these factors must be considered as California moves forward in making preschool accessible to all children and families.

Full implementation of universal preschool for all three- and four-year-olds in California will be costly. Providing universal preschool will add two full grade levels of children to the public education system. Although the task force envisions incremental annual additions of funds from a variety of sources, the projected annual cost in today's dollars is an estimated $5 billion for a half-day school-year program for all preschoolers.

Clearly, this is a major investment. The task force has concluded, however, that an investment in the education of young children comparable to investments for kindergarten through grade twelve and postsecondary education is essential if California is to regain its national role as an educational leader.

This report presents six major recommendations that, taken together, provide guidelines leading to full implementation of universally available preschool within ten years. Each of the recommendations is described in more detail in the following chapters.

Early care and education provides a public good; promotes child health and development, enhancing children's readiness for school and their long-term success; supports many parents who work out of the home; and saves taxpayers countless dollars by preventing many social and psychological ills. As with investments in public education, the public—not simply the immediate consumers—derive benefits. Consequently, the public—not simply the immediate consumers—should be responsible for the funding of American early care and education.

—S. L. Kagan and N. E. Cohen,
Not by Chance: Creating an Early Care and Education System for America's Children

Recommendations of the Universal Preschool Task Force

1. Offer publicly funded universal preschool within ten years to all three- and four-year-old children in California for at least one-half day during the regular school year.
2. Develop a master plan for universal preschool that will be completed by January 1, 2001.
3. Take immediate action to phase in universal preschool:
   - Start programs now.
   - Expand the supply of qualified teaching staff and facilities.
   - Establish the support system and invest 10 percent of available funds in the support system and in quality enhancement.
4. Raise the program standards and professional standards of universal preschool providers:
   - Establish high content, performance, and program standards to improve school readiness for all children.
   - Develop an accountability system by monitoring progress with appropriate assessment processes and requiring programs to meet accreditation standards.
   - Establish high professional standards to upgrade the training and certification requirements and increase compensation levels to recruit and retain highly qualified personnel who can meet the needs of children who are culturally and linguistically diverse.
   - Maintain adult-to-child ratios that enhance the quality of services and produce desired results for children.
5. Make universal preschool available in a variety of settings and coordinate programs with other services:
   - Offer school-based, center-based, and home-based options.
   - Establish extensions and connections with year-round providers to offer full-day child care with funds available for that purpose.
   - Coordinate with other providers to make nutrition, health, and social services available for families who need such services, using the funds targeted for those purposes.
6. Commit funds for universal preschool in 1998-99 with incremental allocations to achieve full implementation by 2008:
   - Use a combination of local, state, federal, and private funds for preschool programs and facilities but not at the expense of other education programs.
   - Fund universal preschool providers similarly to public school funding, with payments based on the average number of children served.

A NEW WAY OF THINKING ABOUT EDUCATION

For as long as anyone can remember, education has been viewed as a process of building upward and outward, of expanding knowledge, and of exploring new frontiers of learning. In this view the product of education is more and better knowledge symbolized by advanced degrees or years of educational attainment. The fundamental building block on which higher learning is based—education in early childhood—has been regarded as relatively unimportant.

Today the traditional view is no longer adequate for addressing the educational needs of the future. We now have new knowledge about factors that influence educational achievement and success. Research has verified what should have been obvious in the past: The years from birth to age five are critically important in shaping a child's capacity and enthusiasm for learning. What a child experiences and learns in the years before kindergarten is far more important than we ever imagined. That experience is the basis of the child's future success in school, in human relations, and as a productive member of society.

The time has come for a new approach to education that recognizes the importance of the preschool years as a foundation for every child's future educational success and achievement. This approach will require a major investment and a lasting commitment to early childhood education. This report, *Ready to Learn: Quality Preschools for California in the 21st Century*, offers recommendations toward that goal.

We are convinced that there is no better use for the taxpayers' dollars at this time of optimism, prosperity, and concern about education. An investment in quality universal preschool for the twenty-first century is an investment in California's economic health and well-being. It is an investment in a future California workforce that will be able to compete successfully in the emerging technology-focused, education-dependent, global economy. It is an investment that will benefit all of us for generations to come.

Karen Hill-Scott
Co-Chair
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Universal Preschool Task Force

"Rainbow"
Artwork by Lily Ryan-Lozon

Recommendation I

OFFER UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL

Offer publicly funded universal preschool within ten years to all three- and four-year-old children in California for at least one-half day during the regular school year.

KNOWLEDGE about the effects of early childhood education and preschool experiences on children's development has increased dramatically. Effective early childhood education is crucial to children's later success and well-being. Yet there is a crisis today in the quality of preschool programs and a lack of access to any preschool program at all for far too many children and families.

In a rapidly developing global economy, other states and industrialized nations are far ahead of California in providing universal preschool and child care. Both New York and Georgia, for example, have already launched universally accessible, state-funded early childhood education programs for four-year-olds. In France 99 percent of all children ages three and four attend preschool.

More and more, educators, policy makers, and civic leaders recognize that high-quality, publicly funded, voluntary universal preschool programs are an investment in the future. Teachers are struggling with the gap in school readiness between children who attended preschool and those who did not. The children who are not ready for kindergarten become the children who are not ready for first grade and the children who will not meet the academic standards later on. The need for quality preschool programs in California is real, and the demand will continue to grow into the next century.

Powerful currents of educational thinking and practice, knowledge about child development, and social and legislative reform are converging today to present a compelling case for universal preschool. Any one of these trends in early childhood development and education by itself would be significant. Taken together, they underscore the pressing need for making available a variety of options of high-quality preschool programs.

Preschoolers in Quality Programs Are Ready to Learn

Preschoolers in quality programs:

- Enter kindergarten with skills needed for coping with school tasks.
- Show greater knowledge of verbal and numerical concepts.
- Receive higher ratings on social competency.
- Show greater task orientation.
- Are more likely to make normal progress throughout the primary grades.
- Are less often retained or placed in special education classes.

—C. Howes and C. E. Hamilton,
"Child Care for Young Children,"
in *Handbook of Research on the Education of Young Children*

Research on Child Development and School Readiness

SCIENTIFIC studies have produced strong evidence regarding the critically important role preschool years play in determining children's capacity for healthy social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development. Some studies have focused particularly on the brain. Positive stimulation of the brain during the early years—for example, through interactions with others and the development of language—creates the foundation for a child's lifelong thinking, attitudes, and behavior. Conversely, a stressful environment can impair healthy development of the brain and have long-term negative effects (Lally 1997).

Numerous studies have documented the short-term influences of the quality of child care on children's development. Children in high-quality child development settings engage in more complex activities with peers and materials and score higher on standardized measures of school readiness (Helburn 1995; Kontos and others 1995; Whitebook and others 1990; Kisker and others 1991; Howes and Hamilton 1993). Children from low-income families who attend high-quality programs benefit in a similar way; these children have higher intelligence quotients during early childhood (Burchinal and others 1989; Lazar and others 1982) and perform better academically compared with children in low-quality programs (Lazar and others 1982; Campbell and Ramey 1994; Hayes and others 1990).

There is considerable evidence that children who attend high-quality early childhood programs are also more successful in later life and become more productive as adults than do their peers enrolled in low-quality programs or those in no programs. A 27-year follow-up study of the effects of the highly regarded Perry Preschool Program in Ypsilanti, Michigan, showed that children from low-income families who attended a high-quality preschool program as four-year-olds had fewer criminal arrests and higher levels of social functioning, including stable jobs and home ownership, compared with a randomly assigned comparison group. When other costs, such as those of remedial programs to address problems of the random comparison group, were factored in, the preschool program yielded more than $7 in benefits for every $1 invested (Berrueta-Clements and others 1984; Schweinhart and Weikart 1997; Lally, Mangione, and Honig 1988).

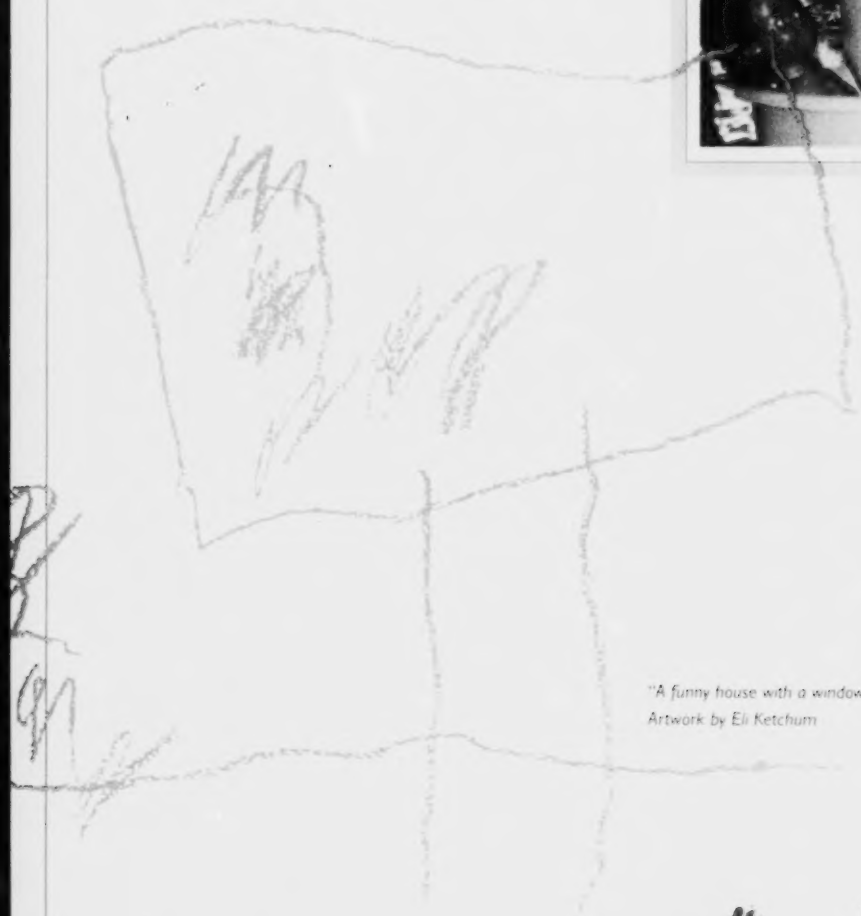
Despite the demand for effective preschool programs and new knowledge about their importance, high-quality early childhood programs are the exception, not the rule (Kagan and Cohen 1997). The mediocre quality of services provided to preschoolers is well documented in two national studies drawn in part from California. A study done in 1995 found that less than 25 percent of preschool classrooms provided children with good or excellent care (Helburn 1995). Classrooms in California were not noticeably different from the average classroom nationwide; the average California classroom fell within the mediocre range. Less formal child care services, such as family child care homes, were of equally poor quality (Kontos and others 1995).

Professionals are not the only group concerned about the lack of high-quality early child care and

education services. Parents report that they have few good choices when they search for child care (Helburn 1995). A recent survey in California found that the distribution of programs and services for children leaves the majority of families without good or affordable choices (Fuller and others 1997). Although the ill effects of poor-quality programs also affect children from more advantaged families, children from low-income families are the least likely to receive high-quality services and are the most likely to benefit from them (Helburn 1995; Kontos and others 1995).

Those low-income children who are fortunate enough to be enrolled in publicly supported child development services, such as Head Start, State Preschool, or state General Child Care and Development programs, are the exceptions who generally receive high-quality services (Helburn 1995; Phillips and others 1994). Yet the state provides preschool for only 48,000 children through its State Preschool program—an estimated 18 percent of the children eligible for these services (Stokley 1996). The federal Head Start program serves an additional 80,000 low-income children.

UCLA Child Development Center



"A funny house with a window and lights"
Artwork by Eli Ketchum

Welfare Reform

NEW welfare reform legislation is placing additional strains on the early child care and education system. At both the federal and state levels, welfare reform laws increasingly require parents to work outside the home and provide funding for child care. As the reforms affect growing numbers of families, there will be a corresponding growth in the demand for preschool, extended hours of child care, and related services. In June 1997 a Field Institute poll found that 62 percent of those polled considered child care services that enable welfare participants to attend school, work training, or work "extremely important" (California Center for Health Improvement 1997).

The expedient method of implementing welfare reform would be to place young children in the least costly care settings with little attention to desired learning results. However, caution should be taken to prevent the children of welfare recipients from becoming the next generation on welfare; the children need stimulating environments in which to develop the skills they need for success in school.

Changing Demographics

California is one of the fastest-growing and most diverse states in the nation. One in eight of the nation's children lives in California, and projections are that by 2025 this ratio will be one in five. According to a statewide survey, 25 percent of California's children were living in poverty in 1996, an increase from 22.3 percent in 1990. The survey found that 1.2 million children had a parent earning the minimum wage. While the monthly income for full-time minimum-wage work averaged $858 in 1996, the average cost of child care in California was $407 (Children Now 1997).

In addition, more than 35 percent, or 167,000, of the children entering kindergarten in California in 1996 were limited-English proficient; and more than 21,000 children between birth and four years of age in 1997 qualified for special education (California Department of Education 1997b).

The Relationship Between Child Care and Universal Preschool

A QUALITY child care and development program should be indistinguishable from the proposed universal preschool program. Indeed, many current providers who meet the standards described in this report will elect to participate in universal preschool.

Universal preschool, like quality child care programs, will offer many structured learning activities that support children's emerging literacy and numeracy skills, coping skills, and socialization skills to prepare children for a school setting and to promote a successful transition to kindergarten and the primary grades. There will also be a formal family involvement and education component.

However, because of the fiscal reality of providing preschool services to 575,000 four-year-olds and 555,000 three-year-olds, the Universal Preschool Task Force determined that its recommendations should focus on publicly funding early education and development services that emphasize school readiness and that these services, like kindergarten, should be provided for one-half day throughout the regular school year.

At the same time the task force recognized that the majority of families in California work full time, and many need full-day, year-round quality services for their young children. The task force members concurred that families should pay, according to a sliding scale, for extended hours of child care beyond the half-day preschool program; and they recommended that providing full-day, year-round care should be a priority issue to be addressed by the master plan for universal preschool (see Recommendation 2).

Recommendation 2

MASTER PLAN

Develop a master plan for universal preschool that will be completed by January 1, 2001.

If quality preschools were universally available in California today, they would serve more than 1.13 million three- and four-year-old children. Although well over 500,000 children in that age group currently participate in some form of full-day or partial-day child care, as many as 75 percent of these programs and services are not educationally or developmentally appropriate. These programs do not employ qualified staff, develop partnerships with families, meet children's needs for warm and responsive relationships, or implement a curriculum and effective learning experiences that help children reach developmental milestones. Some programs actually threaten children's health and safety (Carnegie Task Force on Learning in the Primary Grades 1996).

Although a great deal is already known about quality child development programs, the challenge of providing universal preschool in California is massive and will require a major investment of time and resources. A systematic, carefully crafted plan needs to be developed. This type of master plan was also envisioned by the commissioners who revised California's Master Plan for Higher Education in 1987. J. Gary Shansby, chair of the Commission for the Review of the Master Plan for Higher Education, wrote in his cover letter accompanying the final document:

> The reforms we propose are essential to meeting current and foreseeable future changes. In time, however, further changes in the educational system are likely to be necessary. We therefore recommend that early in the 21st century *a new commission be established to develop a Master Plan for all California education, preschool through Ph.D., public and private.* (Emphasis added)

The Universal Preschool Task Force recommends the development of a comprehensive and broadly representative master plan for universal preschool by January 1, 2001. The planning process should involve participants throughout California and should begin by convening a broadly representative group, including parents, child development experts and researchers, kindergarten-through-grade-twelve teachers and administrators, state and local elected officials, business leaders, and leaders from teacher education institutions. The task force recommends that the California Master Plan for Higher Education be used as a model and that adequate and appropriate time and resources be devoted to developing a master plan for universal preschool that will provide information about the most critical needs and the available resources to meet those needs.

The master plan should provide a design for full implementation of universal preschool by the year 2008.

Master Plan Design

THE plan should address a wide range of specific issues as shown in the following outline:

Financing

- Sources of funds that will be required to fully implement and sustain the program
- The role of local, state, and federal government in financing
- Potential implications of using Proposition 98 funds
- Participation by businesses and the private sector in funding or offsetting costs

Facilities Acquisition and Building Standards

- Alternative methods for acquiring the supply of needed facilities, such as through bonds and tax credits for businesses that provide or support preschool facilities
- Reassessment of existing laws and regulations pertaining to facilities

Staffing

- Refinement of professional standards
- Teacher training programs to assist candidates in meeting the professional standards
- Recruitment and retention strategies to ensure an adequate supply of qualified teachers
- Establishment of salary levels and identification of steps that must be taken to ensure appropriate compensation and to reduce staff turnover

Program Standards

- Updating of program standards and linking of desired results for preschool children with current content and performance standards for early elementary students
- Assessment of culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate services and provision of needed program modifications

Program Evaluation

- Statewide evaluation design that measures the impact of universal preschool on children's school readiness and other desired results
- Methodology to assess the return on investment

Support System and Governance

- Determination of state and local governance alternatives and state and local roles in such issues as setting standards; accrediting and monitoring providers; establishing priorities and funding options; providing technical assistance; and supporting and involving families

Linkages and Collaboration

- Determination of what is needed to maximize the number of preschools that provide or coordinate with others to provide extended hours/days of child care needed by working parents
- Coordinated services among preschool programs and providers of nutrition services, health and social services, and transportation
- Mechanisms for articulation and coordination of programs for children ages birth through three years and for kindergarten and beyond to ensure smooth transitions leading to greater school success and a continuum of care and developmental education for children ages birth through eight years

The task force recommends that legislation be introduced immediately to fund the development of the master plan so that the plan is completed by January 1, 2001. The projected cost is approximately $750,000 for two years.

Yuba College Child Development Center

"Me"
Artwork by Stuart Sanchez

Recommendation 3

START NOW

Take immediate action to phase in universal preschool:

- **Start programs now.**
- **Expand the supply of qualified teaching staff and facilities.**
- **Establish the support system and invest 10 percent of available funds in the support system and in quality enhancement.**

THE research on the connection between quality child development programs and school readiness, among other short-term and long-term results, prompts the recommendation that California begin phasing in universal preschool *now*. Enough is known about quality preschool programs to ensure that services may be expanded and improved with confidence. Furthermore, there are early indications that both state and federal funds may be available to start programs in 1998.

First-year universal preschool funds should be allocated immediately to initiate the program and additional funds should be allocated to fully implement quality, universally accessible preschools by 2008. Full implementation will involve an incremental annual investment in direct services, staff, facilities, and the support structure.

Start Programs Now

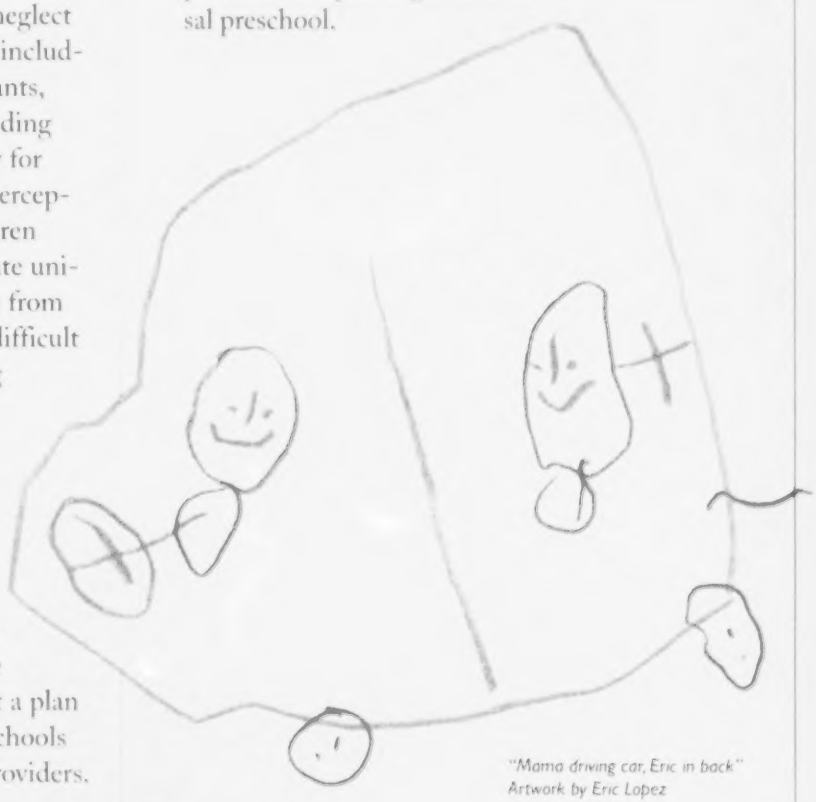
THE providers of universal preschool will need to meet the standards described later in this report (see Recommendation 4, "Standards"). At first providers who come close to meeting the universal preschool standards will participate voluntarily and receive universal preschool funds. The providers will agree to complete training and upgrade the program to meet universal preschool program and professional standards within two years. This approach will maintain the state's diverse provider options of school-based, center-based, and home-based programs that respond to family and community needs. Through this process the state can ensure that progress toward meeting the desired results for children will begin during the early stages of phasing in the program. The initial programs will serve as the foundation for those that follow.

There are several alternatives for starting up universal preschool services. If $500 million is available for program implementation during the first year (one-tenth of the projected cost of serving all children three and four years of age), at least $300 million of that amount should be issued to providers to begin operating universal preschool programs immediately. The task force recommends that one, or a combination, of the following alternative approaches to phasing in the program be selected for the first two years:

- Allocate approximately two-thirds of the start-up implementation funds to communities, such as those identified in *An Unfair Head Start* (Fuller and others 1997), that are currently underserved by subsidized child development

providers and allocate the remaining one-third to other providers. An advantage of this approach would be that children who had been denied services because of an insufficient number of providers in their communities would receive quality services. The current disparity in the provision of services would be minimized. Yet a large investment of time, effort, and money might be needed in these communities to start up services where few or none existed.

- Augment funding for State Preschool and General Child Care and Development programs to enable them to meet universal preschool standards. The augmentation funds would be used for professional development and increases in teaching staff salaries to make them comparable to salaries of early primary grades teaching staff. These state and federal programs come close to meeting the standards envisioned for universal preschool and could easily become the first demonstration group. The programs currently serve children at risk of abuse or neglect and children from low-income families, including CalWORKs (see Glossary) participants, who need quality services. However, funding universal preschool programs exclusively for low-income children may result in the perception that the program is for at-risk children only. If the program does not demonstrate universality at the outset, enrolling children from families with higher incomes might be difficult later on. Furthermore, simply expanding State Preschool without attending to families' needs for full-day, year-round care may not be an attractive option for enough qualified families.
- Allocate start-up and implementation funds for "saturation" models in diverse target communities. The models would be selected through a competitive process that requires providers to submit a plan ensuring universal access to quality preschools and the availability of diverse types of providers. These "saturation" programs would be potential models for other communities; the programs would also be helpful in early evaluation of universal preschool. The models may or may not address the current problem of disparity of services.
- Allocate implementation funds to any program that agrees to meet universal preschool standards within two years and that serves children on a first-come, first-served basis. This alternative would result in programs for children from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, although it may not address the disparity of existing services.
- Award planning grants in combination with any of the other approaches. Planning grants would provide resources to help communities, cities, school districts, and other local planning entities design and implement plans to recruit qualified staff, acquire facilities, and identify priorities for phasing in universal preschool.



"Mama driving car, Eric in back"
Artwork by Eric Lopez

Expand Staff and Facilities

In addition to recommending the allocation of funds for direct services, the task force recommends that in the early years of implementation a substantial amount of new resources be directed to increasing the supply of qualified teaching staff and expanding the number of facilities. If universal preschool classes all had 24 children, an estimated *additional* 3,900 classrooms and 11,700 teaching staff would be needed *each year for ten years* to serve more than one million California children ages three and four. Fortunately, many current school-based, center-based, and home-based providers are likely to offer universal preschool in their existing facilities, reducing the need for facilities.

Staff. A portion of the first allocation of universal preschool funds should be directed to innovative training, recruitment, and retention strategies; internships; and scholarships. Some resources should be targeted to recruiting more male teachers and bilingual teachers. Funds to expand the pool of qualified teachers should be directed to teacher training institutions.

Facilities. A lack of appropriate facilities could be a major obstacle. This lack already results in communities being unable to provide subsidized child development programs. Work must begin on several levels to provide the needed space for universal preschool. The proposed master plan must identify realistic remedies to the facilities shortage. Communities will need to assess and take measures to expand their facilities. Meanwhile, some new funds should be dedicated to providing preschool facilities.

Establish the Support System

Finally, a well-designed support system will be required to establish and sustain a quality preschool program serving more than one million children. Although some elements of the support system will be determined during the master plan process, other elements must be funded to make the program start-up possible. The support roles and responsibilities should be distributed among the California Department of Education and local entities, such as the local planning councils and resource and referral programs. Funding should be allocated to these agencies accordingly. Support elements include:

- State and local governance systems
- State program administration
- State and local technical assistance and professional development activities
- Local parent resource and referral services
- State and local accreditation and oversight systems
- State-managed rewards and interventions programs
- Local data reporting and state data collection
- Statewide program evaluation

Statewide Evaluation

Data collected in the course of program evaluation are essential for local program improvement and state decision making regarding program design and funding allocations. Adequate resources should be provided for an independent, comprehensive statewide evaluation. Although some short-term benefits will be apparent in the first five years, the most revealing studies on long-term benefits have followed program participants for 15 to 25 years or more. Therefore, program evaluation should be considered an ongoing cost at the state and local levels.

- State and local program planning and improvement efforts
- Linkages with the kindergarten-through-grade-twelve system, other child- and family-serving entities, and businesses at the state and local levels

The publication *Not By Chance: Creating an Early Care and Education System for America's Children* synthesizes the major recommendations from the *Quality 2000* Initiative (see Glossary). One of the recommendations proposes that 10 percent of all public early care and education funds should be invested directly in the "infrastructure/quality enhancement," which includes support for parent involvement; data collection, planning, governance, and evaluation; professional development and certification; facility licensing and enforcement; accreditation; and the development of innovative funding approaches for facilities (Kagan and Cohen 1997). The task force noted that in the current subsidized child development system, California's allocations for the support system and quality enhancement fall woefully short, seriously compromising state and regional support efforts. For example, funds allocated to the California Department of Education to support and administer all child development programs are less than one percent of the child development funds that it oversees.

"My family"
Artwork by Brooke Agee

STANDARDS

Raise the program standards and professional standards of universal preschool providers:

- **Establish high content, performance, and program standards to improve school readiness for all children.**
- **Develop an accountability system by monitoring progress with appropriate assessment processes and requiring programs to meet accreditation standards.**
- **Establish high professional standards to upgrade the training and certification requirements and increase compensation levels to recruit and retain highly qualified personnel who can meet the needs of children who are culturally and linguistically diverse.**
- **Maintain adult-to-child ratios that enhance the quality of services and produce desired results for children.**

QUALITY makes the difference between successful programs with a lasting positive impact and programs that may have little or no impact, or even a negative impact, on children's learning and general well-being. High-quality program standards, including clearly defined goals, are critical to children's achievement of desired results and school readiness. According to Howes and Hamilton (1993), preschoolers in quality programs develop these characteristics:

- Enter kindergarten having acquired skills needed for coping with school tasks.
- Show greater knowledge of verbal and numerical concepts.
- Receive higher ratings on social competency.
- Show greater task orientation.
- Are more likely to make normal progress throughout the primary grades.
- Are less often retained or placed in special education classes.

At the same time research has demonstrated that inadequate programs can do serious harm. Instead of strengthening children, inadequate programs—those that are poorly planned and carried out, underfinanced, characterized by rapid staff turnover, and lacking in standards and accountability—create inconsistency in the program and a sense of insecurity in children that impair children's potential to learn (Carnegie Task Force on Learning in the Primary Grades 1996).

The task force recommends the following program and professional standards to improve preschool programs and to provide a strong foundation for universal preschool. These standards should be subject to review and may be expanded through the master plan process.

Content, Performance, and Program Standards

THE following recommended standards are based on accreditation standards and developmentally appropriate practice defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC); the Head Start Program Performance Standards; the California *Education Code* and *California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Education,* that govern subsidized child development programs; and the California Department of Education's Desired Results Evaluation Project (see Glossary).

Content and Performance Standards

CHILDREN's progress in learning and in achieving content and performance standards needs to be measured to guide improvements in program quality. The first step in this process is to define desired results for children. These standards should be designed to help children become:

- Personally and socially competent
- Effective learners
- Competent in language and communication skills
- Competent in physical and motor skills
- Safe and healthy

The task force recommends broad state-level content and performance standards coupled with locally adopted detailed standards and quality indicators.

Program Standards

CONSIDERABLE research evidence suggests that the standards for program quality are linked to positive developmental results for children (Hart and others 1996; Rescoria and others 1991; Stipek and others 1995). Children in early childhood programs that follow developmentally appropriate curriculum practices had more positive attitudes toward school and sustained their academic gains better compared with children in other programs (Helbrun 1995; Whitebook and others 1990; Stipek and others 1995; Whitebook and others 1997).

A quality preschool program should:

- Develop and have approved by its governing body a written philosophical statement and written goals and objectives that support the program's philosophy and reflect the enrolled families' cultural and linguistic characteristics.
- Include children with disabilities.
- Support content and performance standards designed to enhance children's social-emotional, cognitive, linguistic, and physical development by:
  - — Using various strategies, including experimentation, inquiry, movement, and dialogue
  - — Promoting interaction and communication among children and between children and adults
  - — Providing materials and activities appropriate to each child's developmental level to encourage emerging literacy and numeracy development
  - — Providing sufficient time, indoor and outdoor space, equipment, materials, and adult guidance for active play and movement to develop gross motor and fine motor skills

Some have argued that poor quality is of concern only for children living in poverty. Research suggests, however, that quality is important for all children, regardless of family income level.

—U.S. Department of Education, *Quality in Child Care Centers*

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— Building trust; fostering independence; strengthening children's self-control through the setting of clear, consistent limits and realistic expectations; supporting and respecting children's home language, culture, and family composition; and planning regular routines so that they are timely, predictable, unrushed, and adapted to each child's needs

Effective programs offer various educational services to support the role of families as children's first and most important teachers. Active parent involvement is vital for all children. Preschool programs offer families an early opportunity to acquaint themselves with the education system and learn how their participation supports their child's learning. Preschools can also support and help troubled families and children. When a child in a family is being abused, for example, preschool programs can play an important role in detection and prevention and thus remove a serious impediment to the child's healthy development. Effective programs offer families assistance and services in a way that demonstrates linguistic and cultural understanding.

Standards for family education and involvement should ensure that programs:

- Provide an orientation for families that, at a minimum, includes such topics as the program's philosophy, goals and objectives; the educational program; and support services for families.
- Work collaboratively with families to identify their interests, to ensure that they have opportunities to participate in their children's learning experiences, and to enhance their parenting skills and their understanding of their children's educational and developmental needs and activities.
- Involve families in staff-parent conferences or family visits at regular intervals and ensure that parents have opportunities to observe their children.
- Encourage families to participate in the daily learning activities at preschool whenever possible.
- Assist families and children with the transition to elementary school by providing information, arranging visits with local schools, and meeting with elementary school staff.

According to studies of Head Start and other early education initiatives, children make more substantial, durable gains when their parents or other primary caregivers take an active interest in their preschool life, visiting the center, observing the children, and talking with the teachers.

—Carnegie Task Force on Learning in the Primary Grades, *Years of Promise: A Comprehensive Learning Strategy for Children*

Accountability

UNIVERSAL preschool providers should be held accountable for the effectiveness of their programs. Assessment and accreditation are two methods of ensuring desired results for children.

Assessment

ASSESSMENT of young children is controversial and needs to be handled carefully. Dynamic, individualized assessment helps teachers plan appropriate activities; it also helps parents understand both how their children are growing and changing and how they, as parents, can supplement their children's school experiences (California Department of Education 1992). The purpose of assessing young children, however, must not be to test children, measure them against norms, or keep them from moving on to kindergarten.

One key to effective assessment is providing time for it. The task force recommends that a developmental profile of each child be prepared soon after enrollment and at regular intervals, such as quarterly. These profiles should be used to plan and conduct appropriate activities for each child. A profile should be based on ongoing observations of the child and should take into account school readiness factors, such as personal, social, physical, and motor competence; whether the child is an effective learner; language and communication skills; and health.

Summaries of assessment information should be forwarded to the child's future elementary school to coincide and assist with the child's transition to kindergarten.

Accreditation

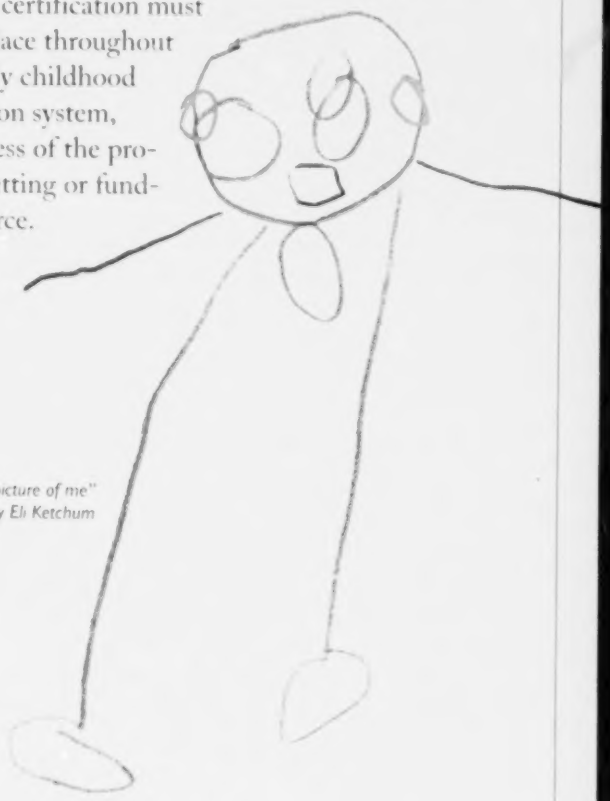
A FORMAL system of accreditation and accountability will be necessary to ensure program quality. Broad statewide standards and criteria should be established for preschool programs, and providers should be held accountable for meeting these criteria through locally adopted standards and indicators. Licensed providers, both public and private, who have the professional qualifications and whose programs meet state standards for content and performance, program design, health and safety, and facilities should be considered eligible for accreditation. The entire system will require support through effective local and statewide data collection, site assessment, monitoring, and program evaluation.

An accreditation system similar to that of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) should be implemented (see Appendix A). Objective monitoring procedures, such as those used in the Program Quality Review (PQR) and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) review, should be established as a component of the accountability system. In PQRs and NAEYC and WASC reviews, the review cycle begins with a representative group of staff, parents, and community members who conduct a self-study according to specific guidelines. This self-study is followed by a review conducted by an external validation team. Finally, a program improvement plan is developed and initiated.

Professional Standards

THE *what*—content and structure—of effective preschool programs is critically important to children's success in the early years. Equally important is the *who*: the adults who comprise the program staff.

California has made good progress in certifying the staff of some preschool programs. Yet the implementation of California's certification standards is extremely uneven. Staffing at too many preschools is characterized by low pay, minimal qualifications, and high turnover. High standards of staff certification must be in place throughout the early childhood education system, regardless of the program setting or funding source.



"A picture of me"
Artwork by Eli Ketchum

Child development researchers distinguish between *process* quality and *structural* quality in early childhood programs. Process quality refers to the interactions that children have with adults, peers, and materials. Structural quality refers to standards, including teacher qualifications and adult-to-child ratios, that may be subject to regulation. Process quality most directly influences children's development; structural quality influences process quality (Kontos and others 1995; Whitebook and others 1990; Howes and others 1992).

Three elements of structural quality—teacher education, staff compensation, and adult-to-child ratios—consistently are the best predictors of high process quality in early childhood programs (Whitebook and others 1997; Phillipsen and others In press; Howes and Norris In press). Teachers with bachelor's degrees who are adequately compensated and teach in programs that meet professional standards for adult-child ratios are the most likely to stay for a long time in their positions and to be effective in enhancing children's development (Whitebook and others 1997).

The shift to a more effective system of program staffing and certification will be difficult and will take time. However, staff certification will be an essential step toward an early childhood education system that offers quality programming for all children.

Training and Certification

CALIFORNIA is ahead of other states in certifying early childhood professionals. The Advancing Careers Project laid the groundwork for the Child Development Permit Matrix, adopted by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), which identifies clear criteria for six levels of staff in child development centers, from assistant to program director (see Appendix B). In conjunction with the new matrix, the CTC recently adopted a set of standards that may be used to guide the course of study for child development teacher training programs. The matrix is the product of a broad-based group and is the basis for the following task force recommendations on professional standards:

- The "Alternative Qualifications" descriptors in the Child Development Permit Matrix should be used to define the training, experience, and continuing education criteria for professional certification of preschool administrators, teachers, and staff, with the modification described in the next bulleted item.
- A revised master teacher credential should be created with the following criteria:
  - — A bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education/Child Development (ECE/CD), including at least 200 hours of supervised field work with preschool children
  - — A bachelor's degree (not ECE/CD) plus 24 units of ECE/CD and at least 200 hours of supervised field work with preschool children
- Preservice training should reflect such areas as initiating outreach to and establishing partnerships with families; developing cultural competency; observing and assessing children; working with mixed-age groups; working with infants, toddlers, and children with special needs; promoting ethical behavior; using appropriate instructional practices for literacy and numeracy skills; working across human service disciplines; and developing management and leadership skills.
- An Early Childhood Specialist credential at the master's level should be established to create regional resource specialists for early childhood education staff development.

Compensation, Recruitment, and Retention of Staff

CALIFORNIA needs to do more to recruit and retain quality preschool teachers and staff. When there is high staff turnover, children are unable to form attachments and they lose a sense of security. Not surprisingly, the most important determinant of staff turnover in child development programs is the teaching staff's wages. A leading staffing study also found that wages are the strongest predictor of program quality (Whitebook and Howes 1993). Therefore, raising the compensation for teachers and staff who meet the professional standards outlined above will be critical to recruitment and retention efforts. In addition, the task force makes the following recommendations:

- Compensation should be linked to educational levels and experience. Pay for teachers should be at parity with their counterparts in the kindergarten-through-grade-twelve system.
- Teachers should receive paid planning and collaboration time.
- Specific strategies should be developed to expand the supply of qualified teachers to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services
- Specific strategies should be developed to increase the number of male preschool teachers.
- Programs such as the Bay Area Articulation Project (see Glossary) should be expanded statewide to encourage recruitment and retention of staff.
- Various strategies should be used during the phase-in period because it will take several years to attain the ideal professional standards for universal preschool. These strategies might include (1) special internships partially funded by CalWORKs to provide outreach to CalWORKs participants and to support their efforts to enter child development careers; (2) partnerships with community colleges, the California State University system, and other institutions to provide training; (3) involvement of high school students in career awareness programs, such as Regional Occupational Program experience; (4) workplace learning and

A Profile of the Child Care Work Force

Approximately three million child care teachers, assistants, and family child care providers in the United States care for ten million children each day.

Who are the child care teaching staff?

- 97 percent are female.
- 41 percent have children.
- 10 percent are single parents.
- Child care teaching staff [in the United States] earn an average of $6.70 an hour or $11,725 per year.
- Only 18 percent of child care centers offer fully paid health coverage to teaching staff.
- Although they earn lower wages, child care teachers are better educated than the general population.
- One-third of all child care teachers leave their centers each year.

—Adapted from a fact sheet distributed by the National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force

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other personnel development techniques; and (5) innovative uses of technology and distance learning.

Adult-Child Ratios

RESEARCH on adult-child ratios in preschool programs shows that the ratio of adults to children is a major element of effective programs and positively affects children's achievement (Cohen and Stevenson 1992). However, ratios and group size alone do not define quality. Acceptable group sizes and staff-child ratios must be determined in relation to staff qualifications, the quality of the interactions among staff and children, and children's developmental needs and progress.

The task force recommends the following considerations in relation to adult-child ratios:

- These configurations may serve as reasonable guidelines:

	Adults to children
Master teacher, teacher, assistant teacher	3:24
Master teacher, teacher	2:20
Master teacher	1:8

- Changes in licensing regulations will be needed to allow some flexibility in maximum enrollment so that programs may achieve the desired average daily attendance.
- Programs that include children with special needs may require specially trained teachers and staff and an enhanced ratio of adults to children. Some of the funding targeted for children with special needs should be used for this purpose.

"Fishing"
Artwork by Deja Summer Fields

Elk Grove Unified School District

PROVIDERS

Make universal preschool available in a variety of settings and coordinate programs with other services:

- **Offer school-based, center-based, and home-based options.**
- **Establish extensions and connections with year-round providers to offer full-day child care with funds available for that purpose.**
- **Coordinate with other providers to make nutrition, health, and social services available for families who need such services, using the funds targeted for those purposes.**

FOR more than 50 years, California has supported early child care and education programs. Currently, there are more than 750,000 licensed child care and early education spaces in the state, most of which do not meet the standards proposed in this report. Most services are offered through the private sector and are supported through parent fees, even those in low-income communities. However, about 15 percent of child care spaces (not including Head Start) are subsidized by the state or federal government. Many of these existing providers might serve as the foundation of the new system.

Because a wide variety of programs serving the needs of young children already exist, a universal preschool program will require effective coordination and utilization of different systems at many levels—state, county, and local as well as public and private. The program will demand flexible mechanisms to ensure consistent, high-quality services to all California children and their families.

Preschool offers a foundation for the elementary school experience. As much as possible, early childhood programs should be linked with local elementary school programs and school districts. The transition to kindergarten should be smooth and predictable. Research shows that children, especially at-risk children, who experience a smooth transition to elementary school are more likely to sustain earlier gains than other children are (California Department of Education 1997a).

Diverse Options

IMPLEMENTING universal preschool will create challenges requiring various types of providers. The concept of options for families should be paramount. This emphasis will require many preschool options to be both available and allowable within a clearly defined accreditation system. Mechanisms should be provided that will assist parents in becoming well-informed about quality preschool programs and how to choose them; for example,

holding discussions about quality and desired results for children. To make this delivery system responsive to family needs, the task force recommends the following strategies:

- All licensed public and private child development providers who meet the state's universal preschool standards and accreditation criteria should be invited to provide services as the funds become available.
- Eligible providers should include current State Preschool and General Child Care providers, school-based programs, center-based child development providers, and family child care homes that can meet the proposed standards.
- Families should be offered a variety of options that are relatively convenient and accessible to transportation.
- Providers should implement strategies to ensure that family mobility will not interfere with a child's ongoing participation in preschool.

Full-Day, Year-Round Child Care

MANY parents today need full-day child care and development services for their young children. Integrating the half-day universal preschool component with full-day child care options is a significant issue. Careful study and collaborative planning must take place to assess the need and available resources, identify and promote practices that best support children, and determine how to attain the level and type of services needed.

Coordinated Nutrition, Health, and Social Services

CHILDREN's basic need for food and other health and social services must be met. Family health and support services coordinated through the federal Head Start and California's Healthy Start programs have been shown to promote children's success at school (Wagner and Golan 1996).

Recently amended federal regulations reaffirm the importance of comprehensive and coordinated services provided through Head Start: "To develop fully and to achieve social competence, children and their families need a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach to services, including education, health, nutrition, social services, and parent involvement" (*Federal Register* 1996, 57186).

Quality Nutrition Services

Young children in a preschool environment need quality nutrition services:

- Malnutrition, and even "transient" hunger (hunger experienced between meals), negatively impacts learning (California Department of Education 1994).
- Young children do not have the capacity to eat large meals that would sustain them for a long period of time. They benefit from eating more frequent, small meals and nutritious snacks.
- Just as early learning experiences form the foundation for reading and mathematics, having access to healthy food and nutrition lessons helps young children to establish good food selection habits.

LONG-TERM FUNDING MECHANISMS

Commit funds for universal preschool in 1998-99 with incremental allocations to achieve full implementation by 2008:

- **Use a combination of local, state, federal, and private funds for preschool programs and facilities but not at the expense of other education programs.**
- **Fund universal preschool providers similarly to public school funding, with payments based on the average number of children served.**

RARELY in any professional field is the relationship between cost and program quality as clear as it is in early childhood education. Comparisons between well-funded and poorly funded programs have shown that the latter are characterized by low staff wages and high staff turnover; poor social and cognitive results among the children (directly related to poorly prepared, transient staff); minimal contact with families; and inadequate facilities and materials (Whitebook and others 1993; Willer 1990). Conversely, well-funded, high-quality programs have extremely positive short- and long-term effects (Schweinhart and Weikart 1993).

Today, California administers over $1 billion in state and federal funds for more than a dozen types of early child care and education services offered through various providers. Other public programs, particularly the expansion of Head Start and CalWORKs (see Glossary), will bring additional resources into the system for early child care and education. The Head Start expansion is dedicated to very low-income, four-year-old children. The CalWORKs programs that serve the neediest children when their families begin to make the transition from welfare to work provide the least organized, supported, or regulated category of care. Yet the children these programs serve have the most to gain from the proposed universal preschool standards.

As universal preschool evolves, major new funding sources will be needed because existing funds provide services to only about 15 percent of preschoolers. At the same time, however, it is imperative that universal preschool not take funds away from other education programs.

Identifying long-term funding sources for universal preschool and designing funding mechanisms will require considerable time. The task force is confident that, through the master plan process, creative ideas will emerge to make quality preschools available for all California children ages three and four.

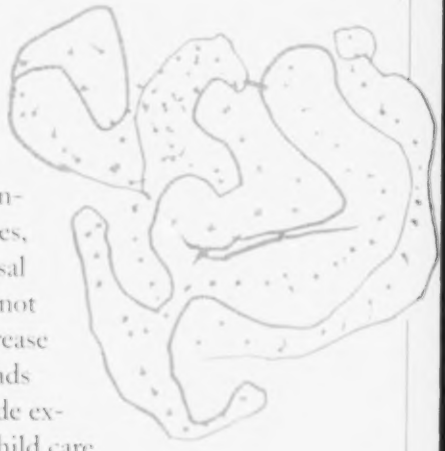
California needs the highest possible quality of programs, staff, and facilities; and the recommended standards for preschools will result in costs comparable to kindergarten funding. There-

fore, the basis for funding estimates is the current revenue limit for elementary students augmented to cover the costs of a better adult-to-child ratio for young children. If the half-day school-year preschool program were offered to the 1.13 million three- and four-year-olds in California today, the estimated cost would be approximately $5 billion annually.

Levels and Sources of Funding

THE task force recommends the following strategies related to funding:

- California should make a commitment to universal preschool through a substantial annual General Fund appropriation while leveraging additional funds from a variety of funding sources. Universal preschool would be appropriate as a Proposition 98 expense and for Proposition 98 expansion.
- Universal preschool funding must not be at the expense of existing education programs, such as child care and child development programs and the kindergarten-through-grade-twelve system.
- Funds available for universal preschool should be drawn from a combination of federal, state, and local sources.
- Other funding streams should be used and augmented to provide the support components, such as extended hours of child care and development; and nutrition, health, and social services.
- Although federally funded child care as part of the welfare reform block grant is one of the potential funding sources, the cost of universal preschool should not jeopardize or decrease the amount of funds allocated to provide extended hours of child care and development services for CalWORKs participants.



"Dinosaur with bumps"
Artwork by Ryan Warshefski

1997-98 Data

Estimated number of children age four years: 577,419

Estimated number of children age three years: 554,982

Number of children enrolled in State Preschool: 48,650

Number of children enrolled in federal Head Start: 79,650

Number of children ages three and four enrolled in the General Child Care program: 64,150

Estimated number of children ages three and four who meet State Preschool eligibility: 325,020

Approximate revenue limit of annual apportionment for an elementary school student: $3,475

California's per pupil expenditure for kindergarten through grade twelve: $5,584

Average compensation for master teacher (half-time): $12,000

Average compensation for teacher (half-time): $10,540

Average compensation for assistant (half-time): $7,250

Average cost for a portable building and site preparation: $120,000

- Preschools should have direct, sustained funding, similar to revenue limit apportionments, based on the average number of children served.
- Program staff should be compensated at levels comparable to those of personnel with similar education and experience in other fields.
- Funds should be made available for start-up costs, equipment, supplies, learning resources, libraries, and ongoing professional development.
- Monetary incentives should be provided to programs that demonstrate high standards.
- Ten percent of funds should be reserved for the support system and quality enhancement, including statewide program evaluation.
- Ways should be explored to involve businesses, such as encouraging them to contribute to a statewide resource pool and providing incentives for making preschool facilities available in or near workplaces.
- Foundations should be encouraged to fund portions of the program through multiyear initiatives.

Acquisition of Facilities

SUBSTANDARD facilities are not an option in a high-quality preschool program. However, if California were to provide preschool to all three- and four-year-olds today, the equivalent of 940,000 spaces would have to be found beyond those currently filled by children in state and federally funded preschools.

It will not be necessary to build entirely new preschool facilities for all of California's three- and four-year-olds, however. Ideally, most providers serving this age group will eventually achieve the universal preschool standards and offer services in their existing facilities and licensed homes. And many programs have either used or adapted facilities in creative ways. For example, some schools have found space for early childhood programs in existing school buildings by providing space after school for "twilight" preschools. Other possible ways of funding new or renovated facilities include:

Perhaps the most harmful myth is the idea that such a vast and vital public service as early care and education can be funded largely by the families who use it. This situation inevitably leads to a shortage of good programs, very unequal access to those programs, and the segregation of children in programs according to income and race. Picture the condition in which the public school system would sink if families had to pay out of pocket for most or all of the cost of their children's elementary and secondary education!

—Carnegie Task Force on Learning in the Primary Grades, *Years of Promise: A Comprehensive Learning Strategy for Children*

- Issuing bonds
- Augmenting the revolving fund for facilities
- Changing the state School Building Program law to ensure that schools are not penalized for allocating classrooms for preschool programs by changing the code to include preschool spaces in the space utilization calculation for each school and excluding classrooms used for child development programs from the available space estimation
- Issuing certificates of participation
- Encouraging collaborative efforts among city planners, developers, employers, and businesses
- Retrofitting nontraditional facilities, such as military buildings
- Establishing joint use agreements among local governing authorities for the use of new or existing community facilities

Yuba City USD Child Development Center

A CALL TO ACTION

THE recommendations presented in *Ready to Learn: Quality Preschools for California in the 21st Century* mark the beginning of a new way of thinking about education in California: public funding of preschool for all children ages three and four. Collaboration, careful planning, and thoughtful implementation must follow. The timeline on pages 28 and 29 outlines the steps to be taken to make universal preschool a reality.

"Bird family playing in the sun"
Artwork by Lily Ryan-Lozon

Implementation Timeline

1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
• Introduce legislation to establish the Master Plan for Universal Preschool, initiate direct services that meet prescribed program and professional standards, authorize activities to increase the number of qualified teachers and appropriate facilities, and establish the support system. • Provide an allocation in the budget for the Master Plan and the first year of the universal preschool program with expansion provisions for direct services, teacher and facility development activities, and the support system.	• Begin implementation of universal preschool in January. • Convene a Master Plan for Universal Preschool Commission and begin developing the Master Plan. • Establish the state and local support system for technical assistance, accreditation, oversight, program evaluation, and program improvement. • Develop and initiate the program accreditation and professional certification processes. • Initiate teacher training, recruitment, and retention activities. • Allocate funds for facilities. • Allocate funds for planning. • Design a statewide evaluation study. • Allocate funds to serve an additional 10 percent of three- and four-year-old children in California.	• Initiate program improvement activities. • Continue teacher and facility development activities. • Collect evaluation data. • Allocate funds to serve an additional 10% of three- and four-year-old children in California.	• Publish and disseminate the Master Plan. • Align the system with the Master Plan recommendations. • Continue teacher and facility development and program improvement activities. • Collect evaluation data. • Allocate funds to serve an additional 10 percent of three- and four-year-old children in California.	• Continue teacher and facility development and program improvement activities. • Collect evaluation data. • Allocate funds to serve an additional 10 percent of three- and four-year-old children in California.

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2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
• Continue teacher and facility development and program improvement activities. • Collect evaluation data. • Allocate funds to serve an additional 10 percent of three- and four-year-old children in California.	• Continue teacher and facility development and program improvement activities. • Collect evaluation data. • Allocate funds to serve an additional 10 percent of three- and four-year-old children in California.	• Continue teacher and facility development and program improvement activities. • Collect evaluation data. • Complete five-year evaluation report. • Allocate funds to serve an additional 10 percent of three- and four-year-old children in California.	• Continue teacher and facility development and program improvement activities. • Collect evaluation data. • Allocate funds to serve an additional 10 percent of three- and four-year-old children in California.	• Continue teacher and facility development and program improvement activities. • Collect evaluation data. • Allocate funds to serve 100 percent of three- and four-year-old children in California.	• Collect evaluation data. • Complete 10-year evaluation report. • Continue program improvement efforts. • Allocate funds to continue serving 100 percent of three- and four-year-old children in California.

Elk Grove Unified School District

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Yuba College Child Development Center

"This is Alex"
Artwork by Alex Sanchez

GLOSSARY

Bay Area Articulation Project. The goal of this recruitment project, funded by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, is to expand career paths in the child development profession through coordination among high school Regional Occupational Programs and higher education.

CalWORKs. California's Welfare to Work Act of 1997 (Assembly Bill 1542) established the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program to implement the federal welfare reform law enacted in 1996. The new law eliminated the 65-year-old federal Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) cash program and consolidated the funds into Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grants that are distributed to each state. CalWORKs created a welfare-to-work program that imposes time limits and work requirements on aid, links participants to support services such as child care, and gives local communities wide discretion and authority in implementation.

Child Development Division (CDD) of the California Department of Education. This division was created to provide a comprehensive, coordinated, and cost-effective system of child care and development for children up to age fourteen. The division currently administers $1.2 billion in state and federal funds and more than a dozen programs.

Desired Results. Desired results are standards which may be used to measure the positive impact of programs on the development of children enrolled in a child care and development program. Desired results include program standards and content and performance standards (developmental milestones for children). Multiple indicators are used to assess children's social-emotional, cognitive, linguistic, and physical development.

Desired Results Evaluation Project. The project is a collaborative effort by a team of child development professionals to develop a program accountability system that requires three components: (1) identification of desired results for children; (2) program standards and assessment procedures that include the monitoring of desired results; and (3) identification of support strategies to achieve desired results. A draft "Desired Results" was produced in 1997 and is available from the Child Development Division.

Developmental Profiles. Developmental profiles identify the social-emotional, cognitive, linguistic, and physical growth of each child and his or her learning style and developmental needs to promote the child's success in school. The profiles contain anecdotal records of children's participation in activities and are summarized periodically.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice. Developmentally appropriate practice has two dimensions. First, it is age-appropriate and reflects what is known about how children develop and learn. Second, it is appropriate to the individual child and takes into account each child's development, interests, and cultural background.

Head Start. Head Start is a federal program founded in 1965 to offer comprehensive services, including high-quality early childhood education, nutrition, health, and social services along with a strong parent involvement component, to low-income children nationwide. Funds flow directly from the federal government to local programs. There is no state involvement in Head Start administration.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). This nationwide organization of more than 100,000 members is dedicated to improving the quality of care and education of children ages birth through eight years. The NAEYC program accreditation process is described in Appendix A.

Program Quality Review (PQR). A Program Quality Review is scheduled every three years for any school that receives categorical funds, such as Gifted and Talented Education and School Improvement Program funds. It is a self-improvement process organized around a school staff and community team analysis of student learning. The study must include an independent peer review by outside consultants and lead to an action plan for school improvement.

***Quality 2000* Initiative.** Financed by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the A. L. Mailman Family Foundation, and the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, this four-year, comprehensive effort advanced new ideas about reforming America's early childhood education system and reflects the insights of hundreds of early childhood educators, scholars, business leaders, practitioners, policy makers, and parents.

Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). WASC accreditation is a voluntary process in California. Nearly all public high schools pursue accreditation through WASC. Like the PQR process, the WASC accreditation involves a self-study of the school's education program, an action plan, and an independent peer review.

APPENDIX A

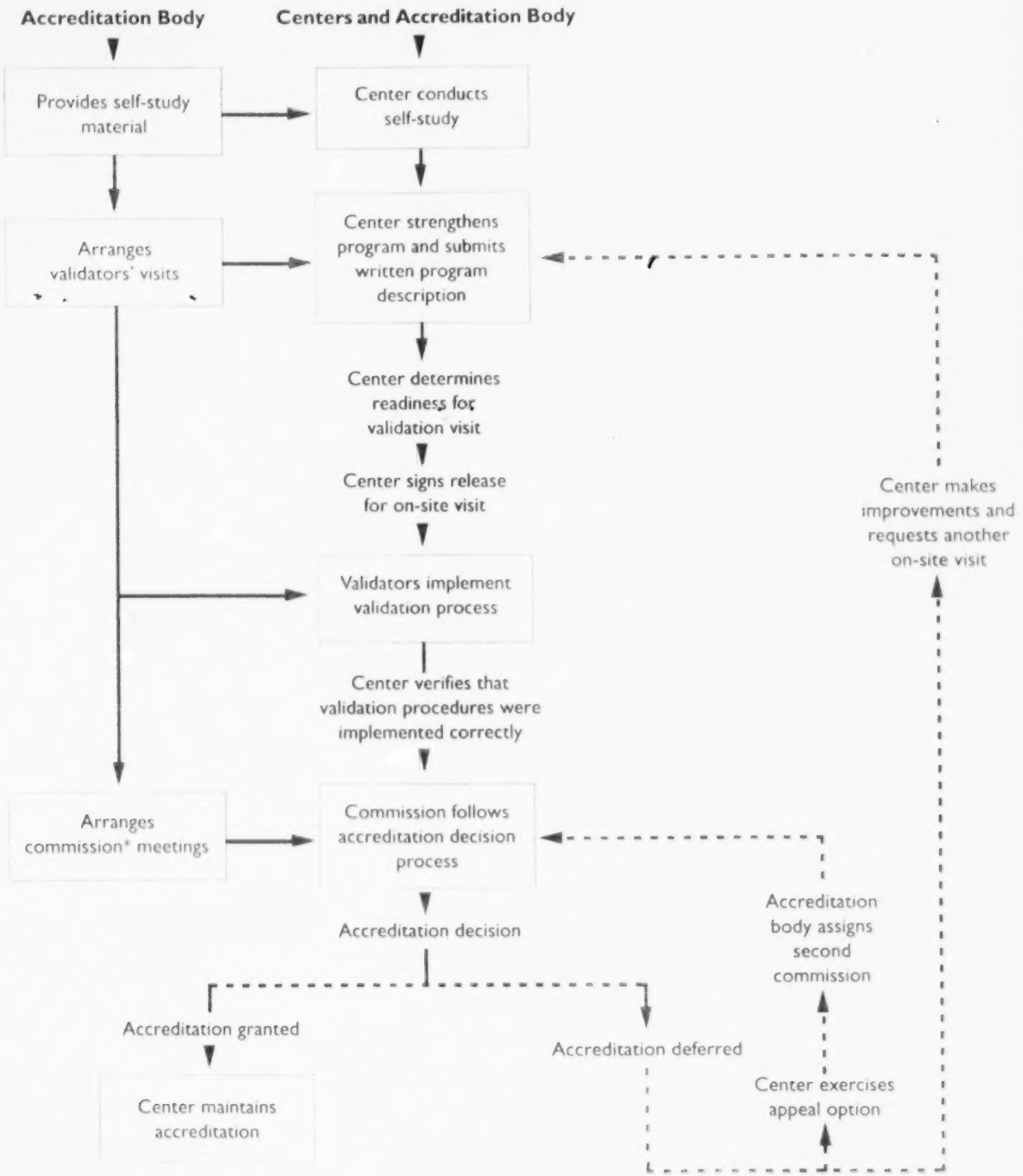
Accreditation Criteria and Procedures of the National Association for the Education of Young Children

THE criteria for high-quality early childhood programs used in the accreditation process address the following issues:

- Interactions among staff and children
- Curriculum
- Staff-parent interaction
- Staff qualifications and development
- Administration
- Staffing
- Physical environment
- Health and safety
- Nutrition and food service
- Evaluation

Elk Grove Unified School District

Overview of the NAEYC Accreditation Process


Accreditation Body
Centers and Accreditation Body
Provides self-study material
Center conducts self-study
Arranges validators' visits
Center strengthens program and submits written program description
Center determines readiness for validation visit
Center signs release for on-site visit
Center makes improvements and requests another on-site visit
Validators implement validation process
Center verifies that validation procedures were implemented correctly
Arranges commission* meetings
Commission follows accreditation decision process
Accreditation body assigns second commission
Accreditation decision
Accreditation granted
Accreditation deferred
Center maintains accreditation
Center exercises appeal option

Source: Adapted from *Accreditation Criteria and Procedures*. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1984, p. 2. Used by permission.

*Commissions are three-member teams that make accreditation decisions.

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APPENDIX B

The Child Development Permit Matrix

In California a professional development project, Advancing Careers in Child Development, funded by four major foundations (Packard, Hilton, Irvine, and Parsons) was launched in 1991. The major goal of this project was to develop a plan to create a coordinated statewide system that (1) welcomes people into the child development field from a variety of entry points; (2) offers clear career paths with articulated training and credentialing; and (3) provides a variety of incentives for persons to stay on in the field. Over 120 policy makers throughout the state collaborated to develop strategies and to address structural barriers related to recruiting, training, and retaining child care and development providers. The Child Development Permit Matrix, adopted in February 1997, was one result of the recommendations proposed by the Advancing Careers project, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Standards for teacher education programs that grant child development permits were adopted by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing in November 1997 and are published in *Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Early Childhood Education Programs* (Commission on Teacher Credentialing 1997).

UCLA Child Development Center

Child Development Permit Matrix

TITLE	EDUCATION REQUIREMENT	EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT	ALTERNATIVE QUALIFICATIONS	AUTHORIZATION	FIVE -YEAR RENEWAL
Assistant (Optional)	6 units of Early Childhood Education (ECE) or Child Development (CD)	None	Accredited HERO program (including ROP); or CTC-approved training.	Assist in the instruction of children under supervision of Associate Teacher or above.	105 hours of professional growth
Associate Teacher	12 units of ECE/CD, including core courses	50 days of 3+ hours per day within 2 years	Child. Dev. Associate (CDA) credential; or CTC-approved training.	May provide instruction and supervise Assistant.	Must meet teacher requirements within 10 years.
Teacher	24 units ECE/CD, including core courses + 16 GE units.	175 days of 3+ hours per day within 4 years	AA or higher in ECE or related field with 3 sem. units of supervised field exp. in ECE setting; or CTC-approved training.	May provide instruction and supervise all above (including Aide)	105 hours of professional growth
Master Teacher	24 units ECE/CD, including core courses + 16 GE units, + 6 specialization units; + 2 adult supervision units.	350 days of 3+ hours per day within 4 years, including at least 100 days of supervising adults	BA or higher with 12 units of ECE, + 3 sem. units supervised field exp. in ECE setting; or CTC-approved training.	May provide instruction and supervise all above (incl. Aide). May also serve as coordinator of curriculum and staff development.	105 hours of professional growth
Site Supervisor	AA (or 60 units) with 24 ECE/CD units (including core); + 6 units administration; + 2 units adult supervision.	350 days of 3+ hours per day within 4 years, including at least 100 days of supervising adults	BA or higher with 12 units of ECE, + 3 sem. units of supervised field exp. in ECE setting; Teaching or Admin. credential with 12 units of ECE, + 3 units supervised field exp. in ECE setting, or CTC-approved training.	May supervise single-site program; provide instruction; and serve as coordinator of curriculum and staff development.	105 hours of professional growth
Program Director	BA with 24 ECE/CD units (incl. core), + 6 units administration, + 2 units adult supervision.	Site supervisor status and one program year of site supervisor experience.	Teaching or Admin. credential with 12 units of ECE + 3 units supervised field exp. in ECE setting; or CTC-approved training.	May supervise multiple-site program; provide instruction; and serve as coordinator of curriculum and staff development.	105 hours of professional growth

Source: *Staffing Child Care and Development Programs: An Examination of the Children's Center Permit.* Sacramento: Commission on Teacher Credentialing and California Department of Education, 1994.

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Publications Available from the Department of Education

This publication is one of over 600 that are available from the California Department of Education. Some of the more recent publications or those most widely used are the following:

Item no.	Title (Date of publication)	Price
1372	Arts Work: A Call for Arts Education for All California Students (1997)	$11.25
1379	Assessing and Fostering the Development of a First and a Second Language in Early Childhood—Training Manual (1998)	19.00
1377	Assessing and Fostering the Development of a First and a Second Language: Resource Guide (1998)	10.75
1345	California Public School Directory (1997)	17.50
1273	California Special Education Programs: A Composite of Laws (1997)	no charge
1297	Challenge Standards for Student Success: Language Arts (1997)	10.00
1298	Challenge Standards for Student Success: Mathematics (1997)	15.75
1296	Challenge Toolkit: Family-School Compact (1997)	9.95
1300	Challenge Toolkit: Outline for Assessment and Accountability Plans (1997)	12.75
1299	Challenge Toolkit: Safe and Healthy Schools (1997)	14.25
1294	Challenge Toolkit: School Facilities (1997)	11.75
1295	Challenge Toolkit: Site-Based Decision Making (1997)	14.25
1291	Challenge Toolkit: Service Learning (1997)	8.75
1292	Challenge Toolkit: Student Activities (1997)	9.25
1296	Challenge Toolkit: Student Learning Plans (1997)	7.75
1143	Children's Choices: A Cookbook for Family Child Care Providers (1995)	12.95
1285	Continuity for Young Children (1997)	7.50
0041	English–Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools (1987)	7.25
1244	Every Child a Reader: The Report of the California Reading Task Force (1995)	5.25
1367	Family Connections: Helping Caregivers Develop Nutrition Partnerships with Parents (1997)	9.00
0804	Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools (1989)	7.25
1355	The Form of Reform: School Facility Design Indications for California Educational Reform (1997)	18.50
1378	Fostering the Development of a First and a Second Language: Resource Guide (1998)	10.75
1365	Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards (1997)	30.00
1268	Guidelines for Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy in California Public Schools (1996)	12.50
1064	Health Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve (1994)	10.00
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